CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for use with a motor vehicle having at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel, comprising:

a brake system for applying pressure to resist the rotation of the at least one front wheel and/or the at least one rear wheel;

a sensor for detecting an occurrence of a loss of control event of the motor vehicle and responsively producing a loss of control signal; and,

a controller for receiving the loss of control signal and automatically actuating the brake system.

2. A system, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the loss of control event is a collision.

3. A system, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the motor vehicle has two front wheels and two rear wheels.

4. A system, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the brake system is adapted to apply pressure to all front wheels and all rear wheels.

5. A system, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the controller is adapted to attempt to reorient the motor vehicle.

6. A system, as set forth in claim 5, including a steering system for controllably steering the at least one front wheel and/or the at least one rear wheel.

7. A system, as set forth in claim 6, wherein the controller reorients the motor vehicle through application of the brake system and/or the steering system.

8. A system, as set forth in claim 1, including an engine control system for controlling an engine.

9. A system, as set forth in claim 8, wherein the controller is adapted to reduce a power output of the engine in response to receiving the loss of control signal.

10. A system, as set forth in claim 8, wherein the engine control system includes a cruise-control function.

11. A system, as set forth in claim 10, wherein the cruise-control function is cancelled in response to receipt of the loss of control signal.

12. A system, as set forth in claim 5, including an energy absorbing structure.

13. A system, as set forth in claim 12, wherein the controller is adapted to reorient the motor vehicle such that the energy absorbing structure absorbs energy from a subsequent collision.

14. A system, as set forth in claim 12, wherein the controller is adapted to reorient the motor vehicle such that the energy absorbing structure is between passengers in the motor vehicle and objects within a path of the motor vehicle.

15. A system, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the sensor includes an accelerometer.

16. A system, as set forth in claim 1, wherein the sensor is included in an air bag system.

17. A system for use with a motor vehicle having an engine, comprising:

an engine control system for controlling the engine;

a sensor for detecting an occurrence of a loss of control event of the motor vehicle and responsively producing a loss of control signal; and,

a controller for receiving the loss of control signal and signaling the engine control system to reduce power output of the engine.

18. A system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the loss of control event is a collision.

19. A system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the engine control system includes a cruise control function.

20. A system, as set forth in claim 19, wherein the controller is adapted to signal the engine control system to disable the cruise control function.

21. A system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the controller is integrated with the engine control system.

22. A system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the sensor includes an accelerometer.

23. A system, as set forth in claim 17, wherein the sensor is included in an air bag system.

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24. A method for use with a motor vehicle having at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel and a brake system for applying pressure to resist the rotation of the at least one front wheel and/or the at least one rear wheel, the method comprising:

detecting an occurrence of a loss of control event of the motor vehicle;

automatically actuating the brake system in response to detecting the loss of control event.

25. A method, as set forth in claim 24, wherein the loss of control event is a collision.

26. A method, as set forth in claim 24, including the step of apply pressure to all front wheels and all rear wheels.

27. A method, as set forth in claim 24, including the step of attempting to automatically attempting to reorient the motor vehicle in response to detecting the loss of control event.

28. A method, as set forth in claim 24, wherein the motor vehicle includes a steering system for controllably steering the at least one front wheel and/or the at least one rear wheel.

29. A method, as set forth in claim 28, including the step of reorienting the motor vehicle through application of the brake system and/or the steering system after the loss of control event has occurred.

30. A method, as set forth in claim 24, wherein the motor vehicle includes an engine control system for controllably actuating an engine.

31. A method, as set forth in claim 30, including the step of reducing power output of the engine in response to detecting the occurrence of the loss of control event.

32. A method, as set forth in claim 30, wherein the engine control system includes a cruise-control function.

33. A method, as set forth in claim 32, including the step of canceling the cruise-control function in response to detecting the occurrence of the loss of control event.

34. A method, as set forth in claim 27, wherein the motor vehicle includes an energy absorbing structure.

35. A method, as set forth in claim 34, including the step of reorienting the motor vehicle such that the energy absorbing structure absorbs energy from a subsequent collision after the occurrence of a loss of control event has been detected.

36. A method, as set forth in claim 34, including the step of reorienting the motor vehicle such that the energy absorbing structure is between passengers in the motor vehicle and objects within a path of the motor vehicle after the occurrence of a loss of control event has been detected.

37. A method for use with a motor vehicle having an engine and an engine control for controlling the engine, including the steps of:

detecting an occurrence of a loss of control event of the motor vehicle; and,

signaling the engine control system to reduce power output of the engine in response to detecting the occurrence of the loss of control event.

38. A method, as set forth in claim 37, wherein the loss of control event is a collision.

39. A method, as set forth in claim 37, wherein the engine control system includes a cruise control function.

40. A method, as set forth in claim 39, including the step of signaling the engine control system to disable the cruise control function in response to detecting the occurrence of the loss of control event.

41. A system for use with a motor vehicle having at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel, comprising:

a steering system for controllably steering the at least one front wheel and/or the at least one rear wheel;

a sensor for detecting an occurrence of a loss of control event of the motor vehicle and responsively producing a loss of control signal; and,

a controller for receiving the loss of control signal and automatically actuating the steering system.

42. A system, as set forth in claim 41, wherein the loss of control event is a collision.

43. A method for use with a motor vehicle having at least one front wheel and at least one rear wheel and a steering system for controllably steering the at least one front wheel and/or the at least one rear wheel, the method comprising:

detecting an occurrence of a loss of control event of the motor vehicle; and,

automatically actuating the steering system in response to detecting the loss of control event.

44. A method, as set forth in claim 43, wherein the loss of control event is a collision.

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